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Contact: Amanda Belcher
(202) 326-1724
amanda.belcher@edelman.com

ThanksUSA Begins Fifth Year of College Scholarships for Military Spouses and Children on April 1st

Expands program to include licenses and certifications for spouses

WASHINGTON, April 1, 2010 – ThanksUSA, a charitable effort to mobilize Americans of all ages to “thank” our active-duty troops by providing college scholarships to their spouses and dependents, today opened its fifth year of accepting applications for scholarships.

Interested applicants can find eligibility requirements and the link for the online application at www.ThanksUSA.org. Applications will be accepted from April 1 through May 15, 2010.

In the past, ThanksUSA provided scholarships to military spouses and dependents to pursue a full-time post-secondary education only, including vocational and technical training. The expanded program will now include scholarships for spouses seeking licenses, certifications and other forms of education.

“It’s our hope that ThanksUSA’s expanded program will help ensure that military spouses continue to be able to pursue their educational aspirations,” said Bob Okun, chairman and CEO of ThanksUSA. “ThanksUSA had an amazing year in 2009, awarding 200 scholarships at \$3,000 each to the families of our men and women in uniform, and we’re excited to begin accepting this year’s applications.”

ThanksUSA began in 2005 when two Virginia schoolgirls sought to mobilize Americans to thank active-duty troops for defending our freedoms. Since 2006, ThanksUSA has awarded nearly \$6 million in need-based, post-secondary scholarships to almost 2,000 spouses and children of military members serving on active-duty status. Scholarships have been awarded in all 50 states and the District of Columbia to families representing all branches of the Armed Forces, including the Guard and Reserves, and the families of the wounded and fallen.

This past Thanksgiving, ThanksUSA unveiled *Treasure Hunt Five*, which was sponsored by the ESA Foundation, as part of a three-year partnership that aims to increase the number of scholarships available to military families. *Treasure Hunt Five* features more than 150 questions on a variety of states, along with the history of the U.S. Army and a new chapter on the Earth’s resources in honor of Earth Day’s 40th anniversary in 2010. Once the game ends on August 15,



2010, ThanksUSA will award prizes, including laptops and gift certificates, to the winner of each game “chapter.” Contestants may access the game at www.ThanksUSA.org.

“With continued financial support from corporations, foundations and individuals, we plan to award 500 scholarships at \$3,000 each for a total of \$1.5 million this year,” said Michele Stork, executive director of ThanksUSA. “As we enter the fifth year of our scholarship program, we look to people across America to continue to support military families by helping us help them with tuition costs.”

Thanks to the continued support from donors such as the ESA Foundation, Blavatnik Family Foundation, Goldman Sachs, The Boeing Company, KPMG LLP, The Pershing Square Foundation and Intelligent Decisions, among others, ThanksUSA will award need-based scholarships on a competitive basis to the spouses and children of active-duty military personnel. Recipients will be selected on the basis of financial need, demonstrated leadership, and participation in school and community activities.

Interested parties can apply online and learn more about the effort at www.ThanksUSA.org.

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About ThanksUSA

Founded in the fall of 2005, ThanksUSA, a non-partisan 501(c) (3) organization, is an effort to thank the men and women of our armed forces and their families for their service to the country with the gift of education. The organization provides need-based, post-secondary education opportunities to the children and spouses of active-duty status military personnel through need-based scholarships. For more information visit www.ThanksUSA.org.